

# Every child matters: towards a children's service

Our range of conventional and innovative research techniques and services helps our clients understand needs and deliver improved outcomes for children and young people.

## Meeting the challenge of a new agenda

The challenge of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda is considerable. Services need a more collaborative approach, different skills and new ways of working to promote the core outcomes. Through a Children and Young People's Plan, public bodies must:

- consult children and young people to identify their needs;
- make services work together to meet those needs;
- implement a Common Assessment Framework;
- monitor against an outcomes framework leading to PSA targets;
- create a cohesive partnership of all professionals delivering children's services.



## How we can help

- encourage community and stakeholder participation in auditing and monitoring;
- consult children, young people and families to find what works best for them;
- analyse local needs;
- promote effective, efficient multi-agency team working;
- design tools that translate research evidence into effective practice;
- evaluate aims and outcomes;
- monitor progress against targets and indicators;
- map access to services;
- improve data systems to assist outcomes.

### Policy research

Many of our studies inform policy. For the Department for Transport (DfT) we managed a national pilot of child pedestrian training schemes to understand how to promote effective provision of roadside safety training for 5-7 year olds. We also compared roadside exposure and accident involvement of children in three European countries, involving complex interviews with children about their travel behaviour. For the Scottish Executive we examined the size and characteristics of the workforce employed as providers of early education and childcare for children aged 14 and under.

### Attitude surveys and consumer satisfaction surveys

We undertake many surveys with young people to examine attitudes and customer satisfaction. For the Association of London Government we examined the travel concerns of students with Special Education Needs in further education in London. We have undertaken the Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Surveys, as well as a large survey of Health Behaviour in School-aged Children.

### Public and professional stakeholder consultations

We regularly undertake stakeholder consultations. For the Scottish Executive we consulted with both pupils and teachers in primary and secondary schools to evaluate pilot initiatives to improve primary to secondary school transitions. For Surrey County Council we consulted parents on schools admissions policy. For the Scottish Executive we consulted representatives of local education authorities, teaching organisations, teachers, parents and pupils on Continuous Professional Development.

### Process and Impact evaluation

Evaluating processes, impacts, programmes and outcomes forms a major part of our work. We undertook process and impact evaluation of the work of The Place2Be, which provides therapeutic and emotional support for children in primary schools. We have evaluated literature and leaflets, including those aimed specifically at children and young people, for the Health Education Authority and Family Planning Association. For the West Surrey Health Commission we evaluated the impacts on young people of exposure to tobacco advertising. We evaluated the effects of new legislation to ban smoking in public places amongst Scottish schoolchildren. For Childline we evaluated their media campaign on bullying.

### Needs analysis

For the Cleveland Community Foundation we identified the needs of young people with regard to community facilities and evaluated projects nationwide that would fulfil these needs. For Eastleigh Borough Council we consulted with young people on the streets to assess their needs for community facilities.

### Geographic Information Systems capabilities

To inform the Scottish Executive's recent campaign allocating funding to provide children from disadvantaged backgrounds with a healthy breakfast, we mapped numbers and location of current breakfast service provision for children and identified key characteristics of existing breakfast services.

